AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling an allocation of <u>packet transmission</u> priority to TCP packets within a switch ~~after switch routing table entries have been established to set up a messaging connection and during ongoing use of such established connection~~ <u>to transmit packets thereover</u>, said method comprising:

a) determining whether a packet passing through said ~~established switch connection~~ <u>switch to be transmitted</u> is a TCP control packet;

b) assigning <u>a packet transmission</u> priority to such determined TCP control packets that is different to the priority of TCP data packets that <u>such TCP control packets</u> ~~they~~ control.

2. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 1 in which ~~the~~ step <u>(a)</u> of determining whether the packet is a control packet comprises checking flag bits within the TCP header and establishing if any flag other than a PSH flag bit is set.

3. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 2 in which packets having a flag bit other than PSH set are assigned an increased priority <u>of packet transmission</u> relative to those with the PHS flag bit set.

4. (Currently Amended) A switch including:

logic for snooping a TCP header in a <u>TCP</u> packet being ~~transported~~<u>transmitted through</u> said ~~along an already set up~~ switch ~~connection in accordance with routing table entries~~ and establishing whether said TCP packet is a TCP control packet; and

- 2 -

means for assigning a <u>packet transmisson</u> priority to said TCP packet dependent on whether it is a TCP control packet.

5.   (Previously Presented) A switch as in claim 4 in which the logic for snooping the TCP header checks the flag bits within the TCP header and establishes whether any flag other than a PSH flag bit is set.

6.   (Currently Amended) A switch as in claim 4 in which said means for assigning allocates an increased <u>packet transmission</u> priority to TCP packets having a flag bit other than PSH set.

7.   (Currently Amended) A switch for the reception and transmission of ~~data~~<u>TCP</u> packets including <u>both</u> control packets and ~~other~~ <u>non-control</u> packets each having a header conforming to the Transport Control Protocol (TCP), said switch including:

a multiplicity of ports for receiving and transmitting said TCP packets ~~in accordance with previously established routing table entries~~;

means for allocating a <u>packet transmission</u> priority to TCP packets within said switch as they are being ~~transported~~<u>transmitted</u> ~~in accordance with said previously established routing table entries~~;

means for checking flag bits within the header of each of said TCP packets to determine whether a given TCP packet is a TCP control packet; and

means for assigning a <u>packet transmission</u> priority to said given TCP packet dependent on whether it is a TCP control packet.

8.   (Currently Amended) A switch as in claim 7 in which:

- 3 -

the~~said means for checking includes~~ logic for snooping the TCP header ~~establishes~~ to

establish whether any flag in said header other than a PSH flag bit is set, and

said means for assigning allocates an increased packet transmission priority to TCP

packets having a set flag bit other than said PSH flag bit.

1018707